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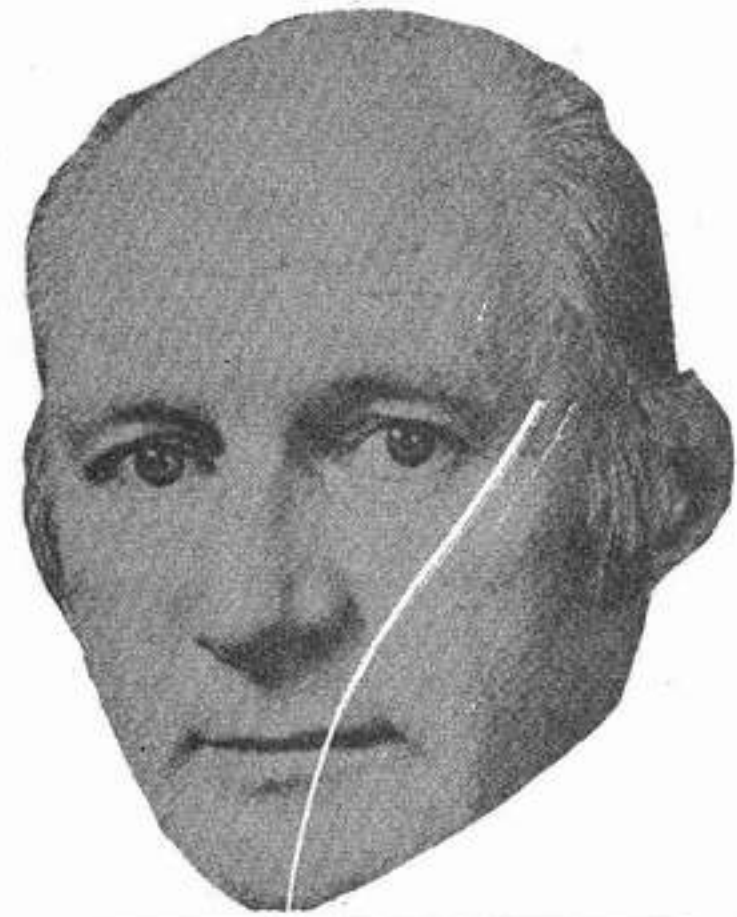
THE
VOICE
OF THE
WORKER

'That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic . . . ' James Connolly

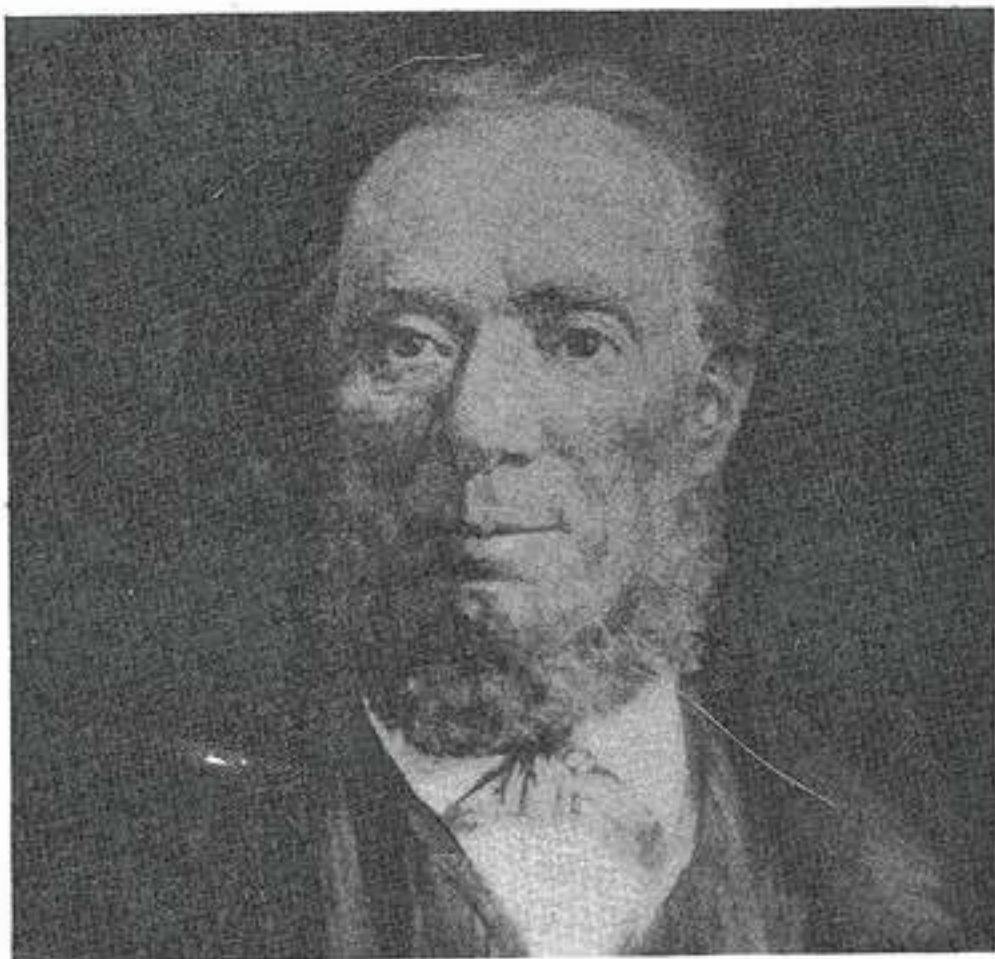
THE PARK DANES



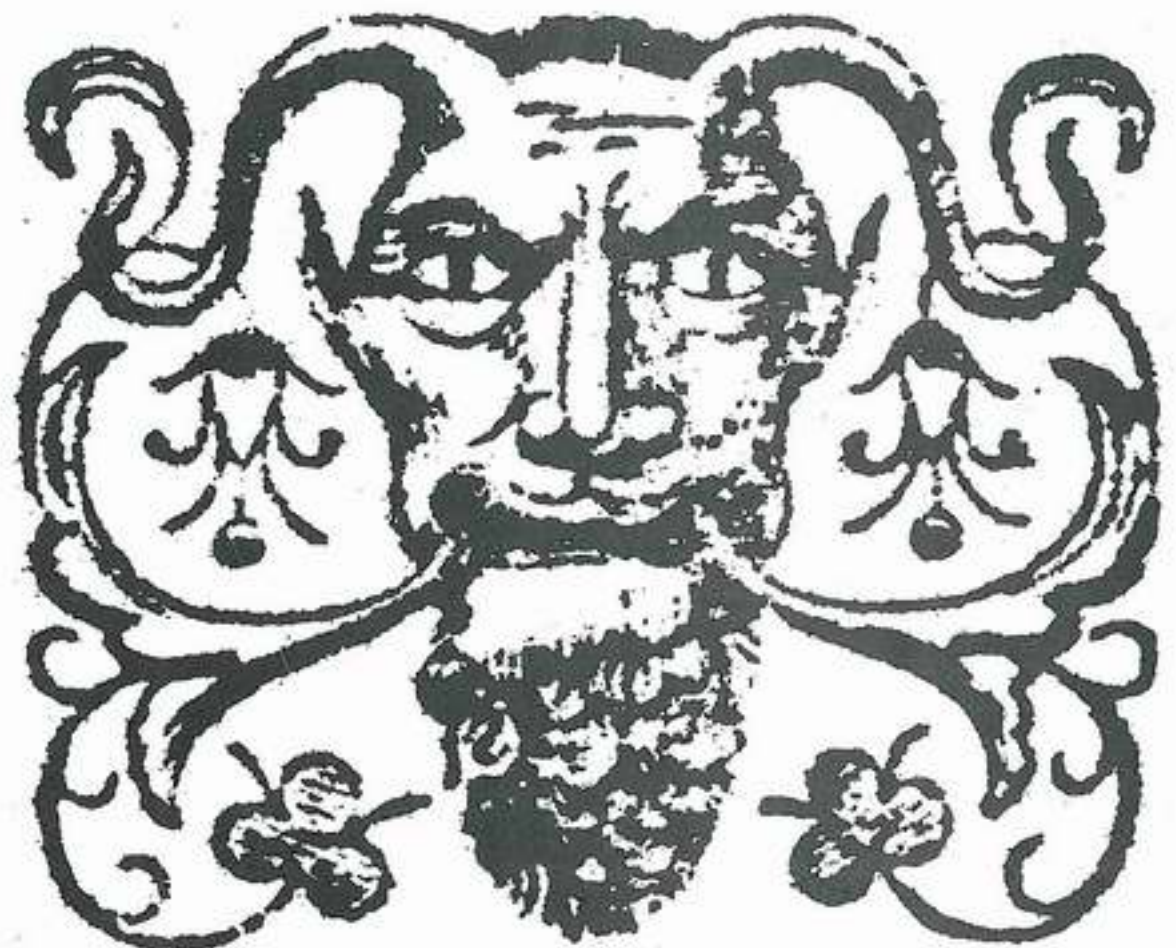
'TEMPORARY' REPUBLICANS



SAINT MUNCHIN'S CURSE



MICHAEL HOGAN



'TEMPORARY' REPUBLICANS

BY DERNOT MCBVOY

A FRIEND of mine said to me at lunch recently, 'You don't think, do you, that anything you write, no matter how commonsensical, is going to change things one iota in this god-forsaken country?' I assured him I had no delusions about the uphill nature of the task, but that I would continue regardless. 'In that case', he said, carry on. But in my travels all over the world I have never encountered such a low-down, mean, cunning, ignorant, greedy set of begrudgers as our fellow countrymen'. He did not think I was mad to continue; he agreed that the chancers, clerical and lay, who have this country in their chilling grip should be exposed for what they are at every hands turn and that the weaknesses of those who permit this exploitation should similarly be exposed — in the hope that one day they'll turn on their persecutors. Meanwhile, he was off to enjoy the sun in the Canaries. I prefer the battle. So let's see what we have in the ammunition locker . . .

For my first cartridge there is a marvellous temporary job in that ultra Republican stronghold next door to you, County Clare. It is Standing Solicitor to Clare County Council and it is worth every penny of £20,000 a year in fees. The present holder is Michael Philip Houlihan, the 36-year-old son of State Solicitor Ignatius Houlihan. For the record, though it is waste of space, I'd better tell you that they are both supporters of Fianna Fail the Republican Party. Let me present first of all the 'temporary' nature of the job: it is to last only for 27 more years, until A.D. 2005, when Houlihan will be 65 years of age. It does not stop even then, but it has to be renewed yearly or at any rate until some other Houlihan is ready to take over.

You might think that the job is more permanent than any job you are likely to get and you'd be right. But the Clare County Council could not call it permanent because if they did it would have to be advertised and the appointment made by the Local Appointments Commission. True, the Commission might have selected Michael Philip Houlihan, but there is just a chance that the Commission might not be as aware of the sterling qualities he possesses as the Council and the County Manager Joseph Boland. Was not it best, therefore, to call this plum 'temporary' and ensure right from the start that it fell into the lap of a member of Fianna Fail the Republican Party? Fancy my friend calling people who can dream up that one 'ignorant'? If they're ignorant, they are only temporarily ignorant. And, by the way, it is all legal.

It is legal, too, for the said Michael Philip Houlihan to be a substantial shareholder in Lifford Holdings Co. Ltd., a property development company that owns very desirable building land stretching for a mile or so at the back of the Ennis Courthouse. I am told that if the Council wishes to buy that land it will cost every penny of half a million pounds. (I must check my family tree to see if there's a Houlihan lurking somewhere in the undergrowth!). But then Clare is a fiefdom of Fianna Fail the Republican Party. The nagging question is: Do Republicans *have* to be millionaires; we know they have to be bereft of a sense of justice but do they have to be moneybags too? Houlihans, McInerneys and Ryans do not just found families: they found dynasties. I can see the day when a bunch of young men and women will be setting fire to *their* country houses, same as happened to the Stoddarts, the Millses, the Macnamaras. That's what comes of fighting for freedom for grocers' gets; it is they who get the 'freedom' — and the unearned increment.

IF YOU have tears prepare to shed them now . . . for John Hogan *chef de cabinet* in Irish Commissioner Dick Burke's squad in Brussels. He has been complaining to Donal Foley in the *Irish Times* that 'an ordinary dinner, such as any middle-class celebrating couple might have in Dublin, costs £20 each in Brussels. In Dublin it would be £10 each in the same kind of restaurant'. Well, I'm one half of a middle class

couple in Dublin and I'd think it was the end of the world if I had to fork out £10 a skull to take the wife out. The message straight back to Mr. Hogan is to try having fish fingers once in a while in his £500 a month house (we pay his rent) and, if it is a celebration, make do with a bottle of plonk instead of Chateau Mouton Rothschild. Let the Hogans spare a thought even for the poor farmers slaving away at getting grass to grow while they're living high on the hog. Brussels sprouts some cheeky bastards and the *Irish Times* some reporters who're out of touch with reality.

AMONG the remarkable plans that Fianna Fail offered in its Election Manifesto, which was to get the country moving, was a plan for Youth, no not the jobs plan, that simply means the dole for girls next October!, but money for youth club activities. After deductions for grants to bodies already in existence the Government proposes to put £400,000 at the disposal of Youth projects. The comparable figure for youth in the North of Ireland, about one-fifth of our lot, is £4 million: on that scale our Government's allotment should be £20 million. It seems that British imperialists are much more generous and concerned than members of Fianna Fail the Republican Party. But then how can you be generous to everyone? Have we not removed the Wealth Tax, that's £20 million, and the Car Tax to help the farmer get to the supermarket to buy his vegetables — peas from the broad acres of Lincolnshire, beans from Ohio and Indiana, onions from Spain and Old Calabria? (If the farmer grew these things himself he might have to pay wages and, of course, he'd have less time to spend in the half-mile inns that are doing a roaring trade in rural Ireland).

Additionally, to help the whole rag-bag of injustice along, Fianna Fail the Republican Party continues the outrageous business of penally taxing married women who go to work. Let me tell you why this piece of savagery continues: the vast majority of married women who have to go to work live in the towns. Most married women live in the country, are usually farmers' wives, and do not seek other work. They do well enough on what the farm makes whereas the urban wife could not have her children clothed and educated properly if she did not get a job. The urban working wives' votes are not as important to our Ministers for Financial Injustice. So nearly one-half of what an urban middle-class wife earns is hauled away in Income Tax. Let it be said here that virtually all those wives and husbands voted for their enemies — Fine Gael or Fianna Fail.

The only squeak out of a bishop about budget injustice has been Bishop Casey's intemperate outburst that the Government is not providing enough for the Third World! Someone should tell him that the Third World is right here at home, not least among working wives.

GARRET FitzGerald, the Fine Gael leader, must take us for a bunch of idiots. In a recent speech in Dublin he said that the Protestant majority in the North would be 'bloody fools' to join us while our Constitution, among other things, forbids divorce and family planning. (I think we'd be bloody fools to have them even if they wanted us, but that's another story). Meanwhile back to Garret: he's the same fellow who insisted a few months back that 'divorce is not a civil right'. Until FitzGerald clears up this question let us agree that we'd be 'bloody fools' to follow him — assuming, of course, we knew

FROM

ADDRESS TO MY MUSEby
Michael Hogan

The Bard whose sympathetic mind
Would make a heaven for all mankind;
Is forced, in jealousy of heart,
To act the stoic torturer's part.
The State provides me no redress,
And sure the Church provides me less;
The State is but a base machine
For lifting knaves and panderers mean;
The Church is but a Saving Bank
For scoundrels of a wealthy rank;
So I've no interest in the fate
Of servile Church or sordid State.
Come my brave flail beat out the hulls
Of barren souls and brainless skulls;
Repay neglect with noble scorn,
And thrash the tares that choke the corn.
Oh, Sacred Muse! allow my claim
Upon thy consecrated name;
Since for thy flowers there's no demand,
And countless thorns are at thy hand;
Bring me the thorns, ten loads or more
Than ever Bard required before;
Steep them in the plague-cloud's wrath,
And dry them on the thunder's path;
Season them with the adder's gall,
And all the venomous things that crawl:
Until I shoot their prickly darts
At muddy heads and miry hearts.
'Tis not thro' spleen I take the choice
To probe the sores of human vice;
But that a desperate cure won't fail
A desperate malady to heal.
Facts are like stones with edges thrown,
They tear the flesh and wound the bone:
So here goes for a shower of facts
Sharp as a sword or battle-axe.

Some tinsel people may exclaim
This rude rough satire is a shame;
The bard should classically refine
His sentiments in every line:
To every fashionable fly
I give this plain and prompt reply;

Truth needs no varnish — oil or paint
To daub a rose was never meant;
And where's more sermous in hard stones,
Than tufts, for truant vagabonds;
The crimes of iron rogues require
A triple scourge of iron wire;
And t'were perversion of the Nine.

With silver whips to chasten swine.
The thief who plots or prowls for greed,
No calm remonstrance stoops to heed;
But shake a rope before his eyes;
He dreads the gallows and he flies.
The knave who traffics in defraud,
And fears no law of man or God:
As long as he can close disguise
His devilish sleight from human eyes.
If rank disclosure strips the wretch,
He trembles like a conjured witch,
And feels his spirit faint with shame
At thoughts of his discovered game,
If he desists from his foul-play,
And puts his evil work away;
'Tis not hell, heaven or God he fears,
But censure ringing in his ears.
Come then thou keen whip, ridicule,
Thou terror of the rogue and fool:
Ply thy sharp thong on every side,
And pierce rascality's iron hide.
Slash scoundrels down in Church and State
Unhood the hypocrite and cheat;
Let no rank's flimsy tinsel-screen
Shield social humbugs base and mean,
Paint the good man by virtue prized
To make the villain more despised;
Stand on no sentimental terms
With Mammon's God-abandoned germs!
But with true huntman's "Tally-ho" strain,
Rout foxes from their dens amain.
Tear from the wolf his lamb-like dress
To show his innate beastliness;
And prove that honest men are still
The grandest offspring of God's will.

which way he's going.

Another thing, the same Garret expressed outrage at the Enoch Powell-sponsored move to deprive the Irish in England of the right to vote at Parliamentary elections. Scandalous, he said. These exiles were paying their taxes same as any Englishman and, *ergo*, were entitled to representation. English people living in Ireland have no vote, nor were they given the vote while Garret was Foreign Minister. Scandalous, Garret, isn't it? But, of course, to be tolerated. Any leader who can reconcile these things in his mind will have no difficulty in accepting that Northern Protestants do not wish to become part of a united Ireland.

None of this applies to me: I was born in Ireland when it was part of the United Kingdom and continue to vote in both British and Irish elections. Don't ask me how because I shan't tell you beyond saying that *two* countries are glad to claim me, or prefer to keep quiet about me! That's one of the advantages of being classed as wicked or, if you like, being difficult to cod.

* * * * *

LOOKING out at the snow — I expect you've been having your share in Limerick — I marvel at the deadheads that run

the affairs of Dublin city and county. No buses, because they cannot negotiate the not very steep gradients. No one seems to have told our city fathers and county grandfathers that sodium chlorids, common salt to you, and gravel cause snow to disintegrate and tyres to grip. Every other capital city in the world has men out doing this necessary work. Not Dublin. Many of Irish, I maintain, are indolent and ignorant. I cannot include Limerick in this generalisation for the good reason that just now I am unable to phone my Editor in Garryowen. Why can't I phone him? The phones are strike-bound. And, remarkably, I don't know who to blame because in all the newspaper talk about the strike the actual name of the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs is never given; he is just the 'Minister'.

It was very different when Conor You-Know-Who was Minister, any stick was good enough to beat him with; he was not like Pdraig Faulkner a member of Fianna Fail the Republican Party, the party that's getting the country moving. On skis? On the road to nowhere. In four years time — and I expect to be in my Denny's bacon box by then (it has to be Denny's or I'll come back to haunt you!) — assuming the country has survived all the 'Republican' racketeers, do elect a few Socialist humanitarians. Meanwhile, forgive me if I'm thinking of the Canaries.

THE PARK DANES

LIVELIHOOD

The farms were tiny, no more than large gardens not exceeding two to three acres, and for these small holdings a yearly rack-rent was paid. The Parkmen were renowned through the centuries for their skill as market gardeners. By hard work and an ingenious system of crop rotation, they made the land produce an abundance of potatoes, turnips, cabbage, parsnips and carrots. The neatly tilled and weed-free plots, with their various hues of green and white, earned for Park the name, the "Garden of Limerick". The plots kept the city supplied with vegetables all the year round.

Limerick served as a big market town for the surrounding countryside and provided markets of all kinds. The Irishtown was at the heart of the trade between the city and the country. The Butter, Hay and Pig (later Calf) markets were located in nearby Cathedral Place. The Potato Market was held in Merchants' Quay, across the Abbey river. The Park people regularly attended all these markets, mainly for the sale of their produce. The market-place at Cornmarket Row was the city's main shopping centre. Originally the Milk Market was situated there in White Wine Lane, off Mungret Street. Later this market became known as the Fowl Market.

The poet, John Francis O'Donnell, was born and reared near the market place and in "Limerick Town" has given a vivid picture of the bustling, noisy scene of his childhood memories, as it was at the middle of the nineteenth century.

*Here I've got you, Philip Desmond, standing in the market-place,
'Mid the farmers and the corn sacks, and the hay in either space,
Near the fruit stalls, and the women knitting socks and selling lace.*

*There is High Street up the hillside, twenty shops on either side,
Queer, old-fashioned dusky High Street, here so narrow, there so wide,
Whips and harness, saddles, sign boards, hanging out in quiet pride.*

*Up and down the noisy highway, how the market people go!
Country girls in Turkey kerchiefs – poppies moving to and fro
Frieze-clad fathers, great in buttons, brass and watch-seals all a show.*

A hundred years later High Street had changed little. The harness-makers, saddlers, and leather shops still hung out their equine products in "quiet pride" along the "dusky hillside". And the old, cobbled market-place still attracted crowds of farmers and shoppers on Saturdays and Wednesdays, the traditional market times. Saturday, of course, was the gala day of the week when, from early morning to late afternoon, the whole area became a teeming mass of people, animals, fowl and vegetables.

The Park people were in their element in these surroundings. Mungret Street, the thoroughfare running off the market-place, was the gateway to the commercial life of the city for Limerick working class men and women. At the end of the street, where it adjoins Broad Street, the Cabbage Market was held. The vegetables were brought the short distance from Park to the Irishtown by means of donkey and cart. This work was usually done by women, who, with their carts, lined the kerb at the western side of Broad Street waiting for their customers to arrive.

Cabbage formed a wholesome part of the poor man's

dinner, which was often "greased" by the rancid offals, bought by hard-won pennies in Mungret Street. The vegetable was said to be never any good unless flavoured by a lump of bacon, or a "jowl" of pig's head. A humorous old story, often told in Limerick, relates how a woman, boiling some cabbage, sent out to her next-door neighbour for a loan of a pig's head in order to give the cooking cabbage "a bit of flavour"! The poorest people had to be content with a head of cabbage boiled with the less attractive "backbone" or pig's tail.

On the evenings of market days, when the carts had been driven home, the roadway resembled a tobacco barn after a cyclone, with thousands of the coarse, outer leaves of the cabbages strewn about the street. These leaves were only discarded at the time of sale, for they helped to inflate the size of the purchase and also had the practical advantage of protecting the more tender and succulent "heart" underneath.

A reserved community who kept socially apart from the fellow city citizens, the Park people were nevertheless highly regarded for their honesty and straight dealing by the women who bought their produce. Maurice Lenihan, in his "History of Limerick", published in 1866, showed his admiration for the market-gardeners and their distinctive way of life when he wrote:

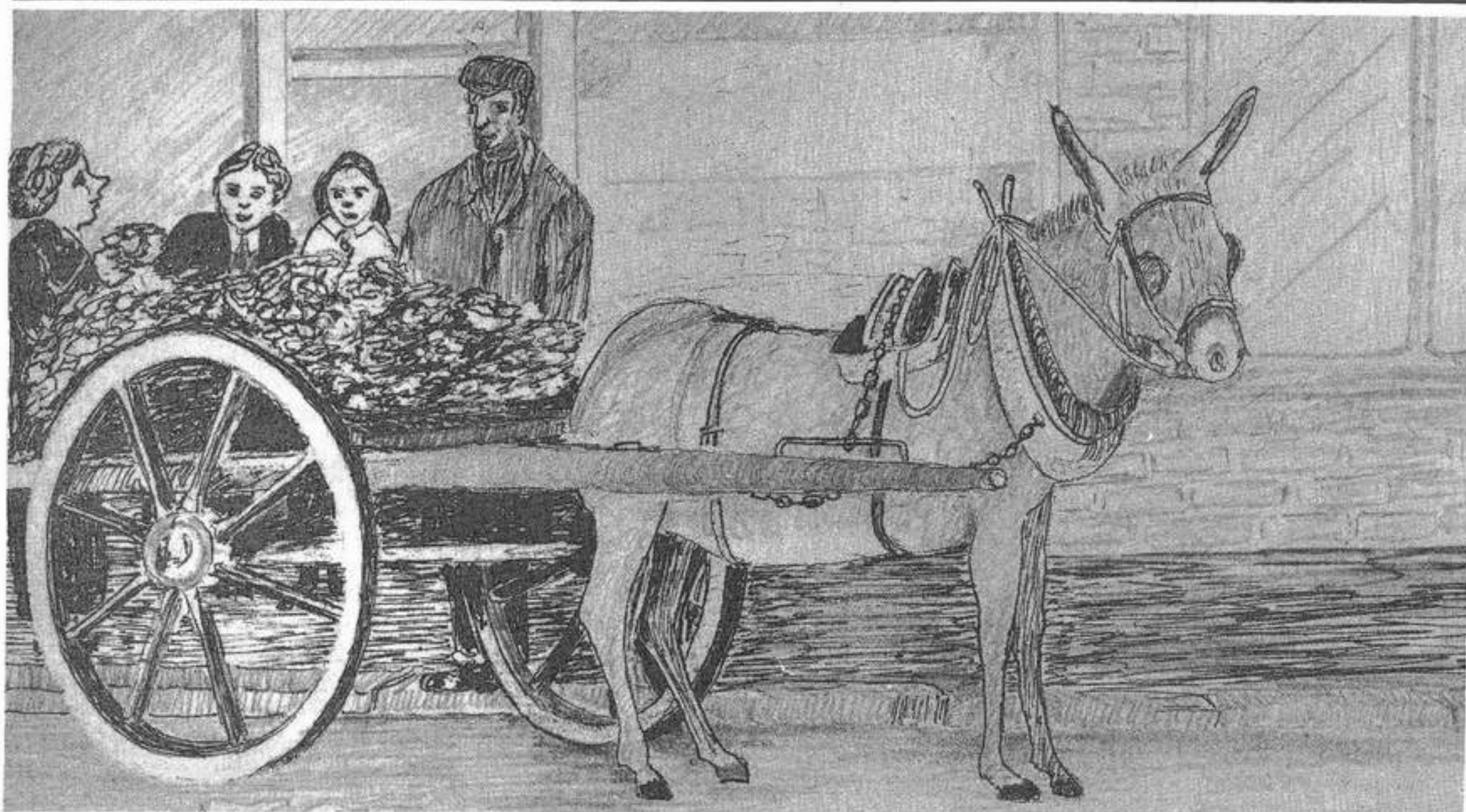
Park is a townland within the municipal boundary of Limerick . . . The inhabitants of Park are amongst the most thrifty and industrious in any part of Ireland. They pay from £8 to £10 an acre for their patches of land, the largest holders not renting more than from three to four acres. They cultivate vegetables with which they supply the citizens; they rear cattle and pigs, and grow potatoes and turnips to feed their cattle and pigs, and for their own use also. They manure the land very highly and being within the Borough they are subject to high rates and taxes. There has been much emigration from Park in recent years, of young men and women especially. The names generally of the residents are Cunneen, or O'Cunneen, one of the ancient names in the South of Ireland . . . Hannan or Hanneen, Quilligan, Clancy and McNamara, or by abbreviation, Mac, of which there is a great number in Park.

Milk was carried into Limerick by the wives and daughters of the market-gardeners in buckets, which they balanced dexterously on turban-like cloths on their heads. The buckets were brought home in the same manner, this time filled with parcels of groceries bought from the milk-money. The women also took the milk into the city on donkeys and carts and sold it to their customers, usually from door to door. Old Park women recall the milk being sold for one shilling for five quarts.

At the end of the summer a few milch cows would be bought by each family at fairs throughout Munster. The sale of the extra milk helped to keep the Park people going through the winter. The cows were sold in May of the following year. A family would also buy about a dozen bonhams and these would be fattened and sold after three months.

The families of Harold and Smith were the principal landowners in Park. An annual auction was held by the agents Wickham and Brown for the yearly rental of grazing land at the water meadows near the Groody river. The names given to many of these "divides" were varied and picturesque: "1st and 2nd Pike", "the Six Acre", "the Handkerchief", "the Bog", "1st and 2nd Well", "1st and 2nd Gut", "the Brickfield", "1st, 2nd and 3rd Canal", "the Star", "the Flag", "the Bleach Field", "the Long Acre" and "the Square Acre". The land in Park itself was too valuable to be "wasted" on grazing, so the rental of the water meadows was a vital necessity, in the year's farming.

In December 1881 the prices being paid at Limerick markets provide a guide to the income of the Park people: Best beef, 9d to 12d per lb; mutton, 10d per lb.; duck eggs, 15d per dozen; hen eggs, 14d per dozen; sizeable bacon pigs,



13 to 14 stone, 49/- to 50/- per cwt. (Fat pigs of any weight were unsaleable); potatoes, wholesale, 3¼d to 4d per stone; retail, 5d per stone; turnips, 14/- to 16/- per ton.

A report published in the "Limerick Chronicle", on April 1st 1882, gave details of an appeal by eight Park tenants to the County Crown Court at Limerick, before Justice O'Hagan and Commissioner Vernon, against the decision of the Sub-Commissioners in fixing a "fair" rent. According to the evidence given, the holdings each averaged about two Irish acres. The old rent paid was £8-2-6 per Irish acre, and the judicial rent fixed by the Sub-Commissioners represented an average of about £6 per acre. The tenants maintained that £3 an acre would be a fair rent.

The tenants were represented by Andrew Harte, who was generally examined on their behalf. He stated that each tenant could realise £50 per acre yearly from the land. The outlay he estimated as follows: Wages of a man for a year, £26; disposing of the produce, £5; seed, £1, manure, £8; letting value of the land £4; taxes, £2. The total expenditure, therefore, came to £46, leaving £4 for a man to feed, clothe and educate his family.

After hearing the legal arguments, Justice O'Hagan said he and his fellow Commissioners were clearly of the opinion that the holdings were not townparks. However, he asked that in the event of the lands being not classified as agricultural holdings, what should they be designated? He went on to state that if the lands were used to grow potatoes, turnips and cabbages, should they on that account be deprived of their character of agricultural holdings, and should they not be treated in the same way that the court would treat lands used for similar purposes at a greater distance from the city? After this reasonable summing-up, Justice O'Hagan gave his decision that the gardens were agricultural holdings and found in favour of the tenants' appeal.

After this decision, the Parkmen went back to their hard back-breaking work with renewed vigour. An engine-driver recalled that, while driving the Sligo train from Limerick, he saw one of the market-gardeners ploughing his land at 2.30 a.m. The long hours of labour also caught the passing eye of another outside observer. The Church of Ireland clergyman, Canon Ross-Lewin, frequently travelled through Park on his journey from his parish church in Kilmurry to Limerick city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Two verses of his poem, "The Men of Park", describe the down-to-dusk working day of the "toiling, molling" gardeners:

I've passed them by in the early day,

*When the city folk in their slumbers lay,
When the dew shone white on the grassy lawn,
And the cocks 'gan crow at the rising dawn,
And the blithe notes rang from the soaring lark,
And there at their work were the men of Park.*

*And when at even the vesper bell
Is tolling, tolling o'er brake and dell,
And the birds are speeding their homeward flight
Seeking for cover ere gath'ring night,
Out in the gardens you still may mark
The toiling, molling men of Park.*

But not everyone understood the Park people and their working methods. Some Limerick folk believed that the "Danes" had plenty of money and were grasping for more. And the gardeners were often unfairly maligned for allegedly working round the clock.

The story is told of two well-known city anglers who were digging for worms on a Sunday morning in a Park garden, alongside the Dublin Road. The men were greatly amused to hear a passing woman, on her way home from early Mass, say to her companion: "There they are again. They never stop. They're always at it. They never rest, not even on Sundays!"

But anyone who knew even a little about the rigorous reality of the Parkmen's daily lives thought otherwise. Economic survival was the only reason for the long working hours; this basic motivation was instinctively understood by the market-gardeners from their earliest days. Pressure on the land was so intense that they could not afford to grow the curly cauliflower; the plant took too long to grow and also needed too much space. But despite the desperate need for more land, the people invariably preserved the highest standards of honour and dignity in their dealings with each other. Fences were never erected and each gardener kept strictly within his own bound stones.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the economic conditions improved for the Parkmen and many of them were able to supplement their meagre incomes by securing casual employment with their horses and carts in the bacon factories, the railway and the docks. The men played a big part in the formation of the Limerick Hired Carmen's Association and many served as officers of that body. "Blotto" Cusack was the carmen's chairman during the turbulent times after the setting-up of the Irish State. As well as delivering cargo from the docks, the carmen also found work with the Corporation and local building contractors.

POEMS

SAINT MUNCHIN'S CURSE*

Air — "The night before Larry was stretched!"

When Saint Munchin was building his Church —
 Sure he was the first that began one —
 With its steeple, and windows, and porch,
 Looking down on the waves of the Shannon.
 The good Saint in temper was rank,
 Such a stock of devotion he'd got in;
 But he kept no account at the Bank,
 So his workmen were working for nothing;
 Sure 'twas well to get something to do.

Yet he kept a few masons on hire —
 They were not *Free Masons*, I'll warrant,
 But true ones, who'd toss up a spire,
 Or fling a bridge over a torrent.
 In those times good builders were few,
 By reason their guild was diminished;
 Because they had nothing to do,
 For all the Round Towers were just finished,
 And mortar and stones were damn scarce.

There was a large quoin-stone, one day,
 To be rolled to the top of the building;
 And the Saint always took his own way
 With his stone-work, and painting, and gilding;
 So he called on his neighbours to come,
 And give help where 'twas instantly needed;
 But they all stared as if they were dumb,
 And his call or his cry was not heeded,
 For they were too lazy to hear him.

"Oh, ye worthless and weak herd of rogues!"
 Roared the Saint, in a wild fit of passion;
 "Ye are graceless and lazy *Caubogues* —
 May ye never leave off ye're bad fashion!
 And I solemnly pray!" says the Saint,
 With his hands and eyes raised in aversion;
 "May ye're trade, like an *ould* woman, faint,
 And ye're commerce become an abortion,
 To smother ye all with *meyah!*"

May ye always want something to wear,
 And always want something to buy it;
 And always have nothing to share,
 And always have ways to supply it!
 And may every pound of ye're bread
 Have the flavour of sawdust and clinkers;
 While ye gang, like poor gipsies, to bed,
 And get up in the morning, like tinkers,
 With fleas dancing round ye, like goats.

And the devil will send ye a pest,
 In shape of a Thief-Corporation;
 Who from striking big rates will not rest,
 'Till they *murdher* ye dead with taxation.
 No other good works will they do,

by

Michael Hogan

But robbery, ruction, and jobbery;
 Pandemonium can't show such a crew
 For base, brutal bombast and snobbery,
 To damn ye're unfortunate town.

And ye'll feast on each other's bad luck,
 With the sweetest of sweet animosity.
 And ye'll never be out of the muck
 Of poverty, *pride* and pomposity.
 And ye'll love one another, like sharks,
 When they meet in the depths of the ocean;
 While ye act to ye're neighbours, like Turks,
 In the beautiful garb of devotion,
 Ye sly, creeping, low-cowering clods!

And ye're harbours shall lose their big ships,
 'Till ye're state shall be laughed at, for pity.
 And the beer that ye'll raise to your lips,
 Shall be brewed far away from your city.
 For your breweries, and marts, and trade-halls,
 Will run dry, like an *ould*, empty puncheon;
 When ye look at their bare, shivering walls,
 Ye'll remember the curse of Saint Munchin,
 While ye flock to the poorhouse, like crows.

And the poor house will clench ye're amounts
 Of felicity, to the last fraction;
 Where ye'll swallow the shortest accounts,
 By the science of double subtraction.
 Troth, 'tis there ye will get the right taste
 Of sublime christian civilization;
 And, if ye don't die in great haste,
 Ye'll get a foredose of Salvation —
 Black *docks* and the devil to eat!"

He was just in the heat of his curse,
 When some Danes and Norwegians were passing;
 He hailed them for better or worse,
 And to each one he pumped a good glass in.
 He asked them to help up the stone;
 And he found them obliging, good people;
 For they never would let it alone,
 'Till they tumbled it up on the steeple,
 And would roll it up to the clouds.

Saint Munchin was pleased with the job,
 And he laughed with devout satisfaction;
 Then he gave every stranger a *bob*
 Along with his best benediction.
 "May strangers henceforward!" he cried,
 "In Limerick fast prosper and flourish;

While, like the bad froth of the tide,
The Natives will dwindle and perish,
With plenty of nothing to do!"

Thus, from that day to this, 'tis well known
How strangers in Limerick are thriving;
While the natives all backward are thrown,
Or headlong to ruin are driving!
Och, troth, 'twas a very droll stone,
To cause them so bitter a luncheon;
Filched, fleeced, starved, and stripped to the bone,
By the curse of the blessed Saint Munchin;
And 'tis every day growing worse.

But he hadn't all things his own way,
For, in spite of his good, holy doings,
The Danes came from Denmark, one day,
And they tumbled his Church into ruins;
And Brian Boru leathered their race,
For molesting such fine, pious people;
Then the Protestants took the Saint's place,
And soon built up another big steeple;
But devil a curse did they give.

* This is a very ancient and popular tradition in Limerick, where everything is progressing according to the Saint's malediction. (Note by Hogan - "L.S.")

Limerick Family Planning Clinic



1 MYLES STREET
(off Pery Square)
LIMERICK.

- * Medical Clinic - doctor by appointment
- * Call during clinic hours for advice and supplies.
- * All leading brands of contraceptives stocked
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THE CABBAGE GARDEN

Have you awoken yet to the light,
after so many years in slumber,
sluggishness and laziness?

Surely time has played its cards to you . . .
or do you still persist in wanting
to be demoralised by those protruding
eyes of greed that rape your soil?

Listen not to those who would,
were they planted,
sell you as a scapegoat to high living.

Borrow not your soil
from a decomposing compound
but build upon your own.

LIFE

It
is a rhythm
given to beat,
a sweet motif
that melts into love.

It
is a stage
where death is unmasked by birth,
a twining of sorrow and joy
in a comedy of errors.

It
is a journey
given for a purpose,
a road
to be saddled on hope.

Around the Bend

A lightning strike of sorters in Sheriff Streets Dublin, is planned for tomorrow. A spokesman for the sorters said: "For months we have complained individually and collectively both to management and to the P.O.W.U. regarding the lifting and handling of baled copies of *The Irish People*, *The United Irishman* and *An Phoblacht*. At our request, a garda sergeant from the Weights and Measures Section of Store Street Station weighed individual copies and declared they were top heavy with slabs of undigested Marxism, dead weight republicanism, leaden propaganda and wooden cliches and should not be lifted by hand. Despite repeated requests we have failed to secure a mechanical lifter which has resulted in constant and successive hospitalization of our members suffering from slipped discs, hernias, muscular strain, lumbago, and other complaints of the back and spine. Further, we feel we have a duty to protect the people from incessant boredom".

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The Kissinger Show

Dr. Henry Kissinger recently took a centre of stage spot in a very interesting and indeed very important B.B.C. television programme. People in single-channel land could not see it and it slipped the notice of many East Coasters. Dr. Kissinger is an outstanding American intellectual, a former Secretary of State and an adviser to American presidents, capitalists, politicians, industrial moguls, international bankers and five star generals on global politics.

There cannot be too many who believe that a Massachusetts lover boy, a Texas farmer, a shyster lawyer, a baseball player, or a peanut farmer are individually or singly capable of making any contribution to understanding, never mind solving, questions of international politics. So Kissinger was and remains an important figure on the world stage. He has a long record of being "close", keeping his thoughts to himself and speaking only when required to do so. He is the recipient of the Nobel Prize for bringing American peace to Vietnam and with the help of American money, and navy he brought Pinochet's peace to Chile. On the B.B.C. he spoke his mind on communism with special reference to the rise of Euro-communism in Western Europe.

He expressed overall dismay that Europeans could turn their backs on the 'freedomloving democracies' infused with American concepts of democracy and open to the fair winds of capitalist free enterprise. On the other hand he recognised the attractions of Marxism for the idealist, the free thinker, the reformer, with its philosophy of equality, its espoused aim to liberate, fight for, and protect the weak and the exploited. Like the good propagandist he is, he gave this an acknowledgement but withheld his blessing.

He is, naturally enough, hostile to the Euro-communist movement; he does not believe that its eventual triumph is inevitable but neither does he believe that it is impossible. Dr. Kissinger is worried by developments in Italy especially but also in France, Spain and Portugal. He gave as the causes: the rapid growth of the industrial countries, bad and ill-informed government (no mention of corruption), a wide gap between rich and poor, the dissatisfaction and refusal of the native work force to take on menial or degrading work, as they see it, resulting in a demand for foreign workers. These, of course, are exploited and, through exploitation, become politicised. He didn't say that needless to add.

So, to put it simply, he says that the rise of Euro-communism is caused by intensive and rapid industrialisation and the failure of governments to insure societies against the effects. That is Marx's prognosis. Kissinger's thesis stands for France and Italy but less so for Portugal and Spain. Portugal in particular is not a highly

by JOHN CASEY

industrialised country in the Western European sense.

Dr. Kissinger went on to say that if a communist party came to power in a N.A.T.O.-bloc country the United States would have to reconsider its position militarily and politically. He instanced the embarrassment occasioned by the Portuguese revolution when, in the early days of the new democracy, the N.A.T.O. countries felt it necessary not to discuss matters nor circulate documents in the presence of representatives of the new government which they felt was not sympathetic to Euro-American capitalism.

Kissinger said that the social democratic parties should be encouraged and should not throw in the towel on the tide of rising Euro-communism. This was obviously an attempt to encourage the Italian Christian Democrats, depressed by the weight of their own corruption and vicious internal squabbles and dependant on American money and moral support to stagger from one crisis to another. The destabilizer of Chile seemed to have misunderstood another question but in a reply stated that it was not possible to set up or support parties in Eastern Europe because the regimes sensibly enough do not allow this. He went on to state that there was no real ideological difference between the Moscow parties and the Euro-parties, only disagreements on tactics. He accepted that there was economic and political chaos in the Western European countries but went on to say that this was as nothing compared with the situation in the U.S.S.R.

Unfortunately, he didn't elaborate on this statement and instance to what exactly he was referring. He finished off by assuring the British interviewer and public that they were not threatened by this 'menace'. The British parties and public, he believes, are strong in their support of 'democratic institutions'.

The programme confirmed more than it revealed: that the Americans believe in 'democracy' up to a point, until a government unsympathetic or hostile to them is elected; that they are obsessed with maintaining the N.A.T.O. countries as loyal satellites; that they regard all Marxist parties as intrinsically and philosophically hostile and are determined to stop them by one means or another. When socialists and social democrats talk about democracy they are talking about something that is at once the same and different. When Castro talks of democracy he means one-party rule in a workers' state, Cuba. What does it mean to Kissinger.

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In the United States it doesn't mean one party rule but it would seem to mean a two-party rule. The Republicans and Democrats pass the political football one to the other; the Democrats are the more working class party of the two (if that term can be used about American politics) but John F. Kennedy or Lyndon Baines Johnson will not be remembered as leaders of American labour. In the capitalist countries the parliamentary parties disagree on minutiae but agree on their basic support for capitalism, that is up to recently, and excepting small radical parties which again up to recent times exerted no influence. With the rise of the Italian Communist party especially and to a lesser extent the French party that has changed. Kissinger sees that these are powerful parties with firm national roots and growing support and he wishes to hold Western Europe as an American outpost to which this growth is a threat. So we have the old classical balance of power situation which is really what Dr. Kissinger was talking about all the time.